Servicing of aircraft by HAL

1494. SHRI G. Y. KRISHNAN: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the public sector aviation giant, Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL), Bangalore is now looking at service and maintenance of civil and military aircraft in India and abroad, as a major business opportunity, as servicing aircraft present lucrative propositions;

(b) if so, whether it has selected any partner for setting up a full fledged overhaul facility for civil aircraft, Mirage 2000 and MIG 27 combat jets;

(c) the capital outlay involved in this projects;

(d) how far it will help the Hindustan Aeronautics Limited to utilise its existing infrastructure; and

(e) whether Hindustan Aeronautics Limited has also worked on some joint venture offers, if so, its broad features and what efforts are being made by it to find potential customers to use the facilities?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI MALLIKARJUN): (a) to (d) Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) has been servicing and overhauling civil and military aircraft for a long time now. It has undertaken civil aircraft maintenance for private airlines/operators with a view to diversifying business and enlarging its customer base. Facilities for overhaul of civil and military aircraft are established with assistance from the original manufacturers. These activities would help in better utilisation of HAL's facilities.

(e) HAL is participating in two joint ventures, one with M/s British Aerospace for computer software and the other with a group of Russian organisations for aeronautical spares, servicing etc.

War threat posed by Pakistan

1495. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Pakistan has been keeping their forces alert at borders and propose to have a third war with India on Kashmir issue;

(b) if so, whether the Indian Government have seriously decided to counter any threat by Pakistan;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) what other preventive measures Government have taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI MALLIKARJUN): (a) There is no such authentic report with the Government.

(b) and (c) Does not arise in view of the reply to (a) above.

(d) Government keeps a constant watch on all developments which have a bearing on national security and takes appropriate measures from time to time to ensure full defence preparedness.

Families uprooted due to setting up of Itarsi firing range

1496. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) what is the number of families that were uprooted at the Itarsi firing range set up in 1972 near Bhopal;

(b) how many of the uprooted families have since been settled and what are the reasons for delay in rehabilitating the remaining families;

(c) whether Government have made any assessment with regard to the persons living in the surrounding areas who were maimed/killed or seriously injured following the explosions in the firing range or while collecting the scrap from the firing range since it was set up and if so, what are the details thereof; and

(d) what are the existing arrangements for the safety of the neighbouring people and how does Government propose to strengthen it in view of the incidents?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI MALLIKARJUN): (a) As reported by the State Government of Madhya Pradesh, 1072 families were displaced from the Itarsi firing range near Bhopal set up in 1972.

(b) As reported by the State Government, 702 displaced families have till now been settled. Cases of 42 families are held in abeyance as the State Government have decided to settle first the families displaced due to the Narmada Project. The remaining 328 cases are not covered within the rules for such rehabilitation because they were not full owners of land in the area, or migrated elsewhere.

(c) In respect of Lok Sabha Unstarred Question No. 3422 answered on the 5th of December, 1988 the total reported cases of deaths on account of accidents in the range since its inception were 89. The up-to-date information is being collected from the State Government of Madhya Pradesh.

(d) The following arrangements exist for the safety of the neighbouring people:—

(i) There are display boards indicating the danger involved picking up scraps.

(ii) Regular visits by a team to the area in the vicinity of the range for educating the people with regard to the danger involved in entering the firing range.

(iii) Red flags are hoisted before firing is done.

(iv) Posts are set up for checking illegal entry into the range.

(v) Regular patrolling by Defence Security Crop personnel is being done during firing.

(vi) A project for barbed wire fencing of the targeted areas has been sanctioned.

MOU signed by BEL for marketing local area pagers

1497. SHRI SURESH KALMADI: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Bharat Electronics Limited have signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Multitone of the United Kingdom to market local area pagers; and

(b) if so, what are the details of the Memorandum of Understanding?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI MALLIKARJUN): (a) and (b) The memorandum of understanding signed in January 1995 is to explore possibilities of a joint venture for collaboration in marketing and production.

Representation from resident of Secunderabad Cantonment

1498. SHRI YERRA NARAYANASWAMY: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are examining numerous representations from residents of Secunderabad Cantonment with regard to property issues;